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While most administrators are primarily interested in the economies offered by the extended school year, it is the opportunities for increasing educational quality which should receive primary attention. The knowledge explosion in the past 70 years dictates this focus. There are four basic ways of rescheduling the school year: (1) The staggered quarter plan and its many variations, in which the schools operate year-round with vacations spread throughout the year; (2) the extended school year (204-212 days), with economies arising from student acceleration; (3) the summer school programs for remedial, makeup, or enrichment work; and (4) the Multiple Trails Design. The Multiple Trails Design is the most flexible of the plans since it does not rely on term rotation or acceleration to achieve desired goals and it allows educators to be innovative. It allows for individualized programs, acceleration, and enrichment, and gives teachers time for individual development. Computers programed with many rescheduled school years will soon be ready to provide individual school districts with programs which will best fit their needs and conditions. Vacations are becoming year-round phenomena and should not hinder year-round schools as they did in the past. (HW)

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IT'S TIME TO RESCHEDULE THE SCHOOL YEAR

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Across this great land there is the low hum of voices rising in protest. If one listens carefully it is possible to discern several themes which, though seemingly unrelated, all point up to the need to institute some dramatic changes in the operations of our schools. Millions of children are going through the motions of learning in our schools with little actual success. Seeds of revolt are evident in high schools where youth have been deprived of their dignity and rights as citizens. Many of these protesters do not see a light on the horizon because few educators have been prepared to institute flexible programs in their schools. On the other hand, innovative educators stop introducing changes in curriculum or teaching techniques when they hear the voice of the taxpayer shouting, "You've had enough money, you can't have any more."

This voice, the voice of the taxpayer is getting louder and louder. It comes through radio, television and newspaper headlines:

> "Youngstown, Ohio closes schools for a month because it lacks funds.
>
> Amsterdam Board of Education votes to eliminate 31 teachers due to cut in State Aid.
>
> Scotia parents vote overwhelmingly against erection of new 4.9 million dollar Middle School.
>
> Parochial schools facing shutdowns unless there is a vast upsurge in public support for Catholic education in next few years."

Headlines such as these make one shudder because it is evident that children can be hurt by such actions. Unfortunately, educators have failed to consider other alternatives in their attempt to resolve the problems of educating the children assigned to them by the parents. For example, Rescheduling the School Year may be one answer to the need for more education, a better education and the release of tax dollars. Both public and parochial

schools can benefit from some of the lengthened school year plans which have been developed in recent years. Unfortunately, there is a lack of understanding or a lack of willingness to explore some of the potential designs.

This is evident in many ways. Recently, an innovative group of educators began to explore the feasibility of a term rotation plan which can save them 60 classrooms next year. A superintendent of schools was ordered by his school board to examine the plan. He came, he saw and left exclaiming, "That's too complicated for me to understand."

Again, my assistant called a distant school administrator who had evinced an interest in a new design which we were developing for an occupational training program. "Tell Dr. Thomas," she heard, "that we are so busy trying to find classroom space and dollars that we haven't time to talk with him." This in the face of our recent field studies which demonstrated our ability to increase the housing capacity of a vocational center such as his by fifty percent through equalizing time over a lengthened school year calendar. In one of the field studies we had also demonstrated how tuition costs could be lowered at least $100 per student while opening the door to more students, yet the local administrator hasn't time to talk with me.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is no one answer to the many problems our nation faces. So it is in education, however, I am convinced that many local problems can be resolved if lay citizens and educators want to put their heads together in an attempt to restructure their schools in terms of 21st century needs instead of following patterns of school organization which originated in the late 19th century and can no longer be justified in the light of the current social, technological and economic revolution.

While many of you may be primarily interested in our work from the standpoint of economy, it may be worth your while to consider the impact of

some lengthened school year programs upon the role of the school in the light of the following quotations:

The Knowledge Explosion

The total body of knowledge accumulated since the dawn of recorded history until the year 1750 had doubled by 1900. Between 1900 and 1950, it redoubled. It doubled again between 1950 and 1960, and since 1960 has doubled once more.

Three-fourths of all the people employed by industry 12 years hence will be producing goods that have not been conceived.

Half of what a graduate engineer studies today will be obsolete in ten years; half of what he will need to know is yet not known by anyone.

This great knowledge explosion is a threat to the traditional school. Here school administrators and teachers often act as though the school is something apart from the world. Many of them would be content to ignore the social, economic and technical revolution that is going on outside the school. However, it is doubtful that they can continue to do so for long.

There is a world outside our school doors that is clamoring to get in. If it does, our schools will have to change as the achievements of man in the communicative arts take over. New technological developments can now be applied to make the learning process easier. Classroom teachers can and should be combining forces with technology in order to individualize the learning process. In doing so they will find a longer school year is an asset that cannot be ignored.

Yesterday, I helped people familiarize themselves with the term, the extended school year. Today, I want to retract it and substitute in its place a new term, namely, The Continuous Learning Year. In the past, many teachers talked about continuous progress, but failed to take steps to insure students

that they really meant what they said. We have now reached the stage where continuous progress has to become an actuality and not a cliche. If your school system falls into this modern category, then your approach to a rescheduled school year will be or should be much different from that of distant neighbors who are operating under a different philosophy of education. Barriers which once confounded the school administrator when he thought about rescheduling the school year can be and must be wiped out.

Repeatedly, my office receives letters and phone calls from interested citizens or educators from all over the country. As a rule they raise questions about the extended school year because of a local classroom space or dollar shortage. It is usually apparent that the questioner can see one possible solution to his problem, but he doesn't know where to start. How to give such an individual an answer is not always easy because we are accustomed to think in terms of four possible approaches to the Rescheduling of the School Year with several variations of each approach. This means we could readily draw up fifteen, twenty, or more designs to illustrate how to attack the local problem.

If you have the time, I would like to show you the transparencies or slides we have prepared to illustrate how and when new enrollment flow patterns take over or where one can anticipate potential savings or extra costs with different extended school year plans or variations of a given design. I'm sure that I could confuse you, however, by a brief outline I may help you to understand why I stress the need for a national task force to help study the feasibility of extending the school year in various types of schools and school systems.

Many of you are probably associating Year Round Schooling or the Extended School Year with a plan vividly outlined a year or two ago in the Saturday Review of Literature and then later in the Readers Digest. Reference was made to a staggered quarter plan commonly referred to as the Aliquippa Plan. Here the

school year was divided into four three month terms with groups of children being assigned to a spring, winter, fall or summer vacation. This plan is often considered as the answer to the taxpayers dream because those lovely, expensive schools are actually in operation twelve months of the year. For many years I opposed the Aliquippa Plan because it only provided minimal education and because I am convinced that nobody can sell the public any permanent extended school year plan which is solely based on economy.

If the Staggered Quarter Plan appeals to you, it is possible to increase your plant capacity and reduce actual school operating costs, however, I would like to recommend the substitution of one or two alternate plans that will have an appeal to parents.

Try to sell the idea of a plan which calls for having twenty-five percent of a schools population on vacation for the months of January, February and March in North Dakota, Kansas and Nebraska where the snowfall is frequent and heavy. You may save some school dollars, but I wouldn't be surprised to find mental institution costs rising as mothers try to cope with children who have been given an extended winter vacation.

Recently, educators have shown considerable interest in a more palatable extended school year plan labeled as the 12-4 Plan. Here students have a series of monthly vacations at the end of a twelve week session of schooling. This plan can be sold if a school system is flexible, however, I have been recommending a much more palatable rotation plan which seems to excite teachers and parents who like to think about vacationing during the spring, fall and winter months as well as the summer.

Would you accept the following pattern?

The school year is rescheduled in such a way that groups of children attend school for eight or nine weeks and then enjoy a two week recess. When they return

to school another group of children takes off for two weeks. This becomes a pattern so children and parents enjoy a series of vacations spread throughout the year. If you have never enjoyed the fall New England colors, you might consider the feasibility of a school calendar which makes tourism a year round business while providing children a respite from their school work before they get over fatigued.

If this design appeals to you, you can expect to release 20 to 25 percent of your class space depending upon the number of groups of children cycled through the new school year. The key to further economy will depend upon your philosophy of education. If you can accept true continuous progress as a goal, you can reschedule teacher time to release additional dollars and facilitate the administration of the program. In recent months three variations of this approach have come to my attention. Actually, we can restructure the school year to provide at least eight or ten variations of the rotating cycles, however, I recommend your consideration of the Continuous Learning Year calendar which provides approximately 200 days of schooling. It may reduce your dollar savings slightly, but you should be able to house more children while giving them more education at less cost than you are paying today for programs based on the agrarian 180 day calendar. Here the additional learning time is used to broaden and enrich programs with no thought of accelerating average learners.

A second approach centers around the concept of student acceleration to reduce school enrollments and consequently, school costs. In New York State a Legislative mandate authorized the State Education Department to explore the potential advantages or disadvantages of one or more extended school year plans which would, in effect, reduce the total years of schooling by one, if not two years. As a result, we modified some earlier plans and created some new ones.

Our trimester and quadrimester plans are unique in that we refuse to consider a rotation or choice of trimesters or quadrimesters. We insist that all children attend school for at least 204 to 212 days. In doing so we negate the old argument that parents can't take having children on vacation all winter long. In its place we raise the hackles of parents and educators who believe that we are rushing children through school.

My staff has continued to search for evidence that a gradual acceleration of students through the elementary or secondary schools will be harmful. Repeatedly, we have uncovered evidence that the modern child is more mature physically, socially, sexually, emotionally and intellectually, but we still find some people objecting to the acceleration approach. Actually, I insist that no attempt be made to save more than one year out of a 12 or 13 year school cycle.

If you are working with large numbers of so-called disadvantaged children, you should not count on acceleration to get the children out of school earlier. This was a misconception made back in Newark in 1913 and in New York State in 1963. It is possible to help these children reach higher rungs on the educational ladder, but their total years of schooling is not likely to be reduced through involvement in a lengthened school year program. The saving of one year of their educational life line may ultimately lead to dollar savings for society as a whole, but any immediate release of space or dollars is questionable. One possible benefit here is the reduction in the number of school dropouts.

Our trimester plan differs from the college trimester concept in that a mandatory or partially mandatory attendance pattern is a prerequisite if the new extended school year program is to become self-supporting. All extra costs and/or potential savings are generally calculated on the assumption that the children will work through a number of "E" (extra) trimester terms. These extra

terms are considered a basic part of the design because they stabilize enrollment flow patterns at the end of 1 1/3 years or at the end of the fourth trimester. At the same time the "E" terms provide extra educational opportunities to all slow, average, or fast learning children.

The quadrimester plan is another acceleration design. Through a rescheduling of a lengthened school year, average students are able to complete the equivalent of a year's work in three of the four quadrimesters. If economy is a prerequisite steps must be taken to guarantee that more than half of the students repeatedly attend school for the full four quadrimesters in a given period of years. While the "E" term is again inserted to help stabilize enrollments the number of such terms is less than is found in our trimester plan. The recommended pattern of school organization will when implemented reduce school costs at the end of the ninth quadrimester. This means that transition costs are ended and savings can begin to be realized in the third year of operation.

A variation of the quadrimester plan went into effect in the greater Atlanta, Georgia area in September 1968. Since the acceleration feature has not been mandated, the Atlanta project may not be self-sustaining, however, a visit to the Atlanta area schools may be well worth your time. Here, we have one of the most innovative approaches to curriculum revision and school organization that you can find anywhere. Students are now able to work through three or four quarters of the year without having to work through the traditional sequential patterns. The work outlined for a 53 to 55 day period is complete, hence,progress can be individualized.

The Atlanta four quarter plan has many good features which should be adopted regardless of whether one wants to extend the school year or preserve the present pattern. It should not be thought of as leading to immediate dollar

savings until pupil enrollments are stabilized, as they can be by insisting on a mandatory or partially mandatory attendance pattern. When this step is taken acceleration becomes a built-in feature of the plan and space or dollar savings become a reality.

Curriculum modifications such as the one introduced in the Atlanta area will help in the implementation of both the trimester and quadrimester plans. While not a prerequisite, it must be understood that teachers and students will have to work and think in terms of new time blocks.

The Modified Summer Segment stresses student acceleration through the introduction of full term or full year first time courses in a four, five, six, seven, or eight week summer segment. Pilot programs have demonstrated that students can achieve just as well in these compacted courses as students who spread their work over a full ten month school year. This design while easy to implement will only produce dollar savings or release space when steps are taken to guarantee that a designated percentage of the schools enrollment will take the summer courses in order to accelerate.

So far the acceleration programs have all emphasized a restructuring of the school year at the secondary school level, that is grades 9 to 12, 8 to 12, 7 to 12, or grades 6 to 12. If one is interested in saving space at the elementary school level, a school board may want to introduce the Continuous Progress Elementary Extended School Year Program to its constituents. Here elementary school children work through an eleven month school year or one providing some 205 to 210 days of continuous learning. In such a program the children stand to gain from continuity of learning experience over a new time line. One added advantage lies in the fact that much of the summer regression is halted, if not stopped.

Pilot programs have shown that physically handicapped and emotionally disturbed children need to take part in this type of program, however, nobody

should plan on immediate dollar savings for an extended school year program involving large numbers of disadvantaged children. For many such children, especially the culturally deprived and the physically handicapped, the dollar savings may be deferred savings which accrue to society from the saving of one or more years of a child's educational life line.

The institution of a summer school program may be considered as a third approach to the Rescheduling of the School Year. Actually, it is a back door approach and will not directly release space or dollars. In most school systems, summer school costs are added to regular school year costs without leading to direct savings in either space, dollars or teachers.School administrators frequently appeal for financial support of a summer school program because it does little to rock the boat during the regular school year.

This is evident in many school systems where remedial, makeup, or so-called enrichment programs are offered in the summer. In a sense, like many recent Title I or Title III Projects, they become appendages to the regular school year without forcing the teachers to modify their individual programs during the regular school year. Often they are aimed at selected students, In many cases tuition is charged or transportation is left to the option of the parent. In many communities this can lead to discrimination.

Many people have not heard of the fourth approach which has been referred to as the Multiple Trails Design. It is different from all other approaches because it does not depend on term rotation or acceleration to achieve desired goals. This is one of my favorite lengthened school year plans because the ultimate variations which we refer to as Stages IV and V can lead to my school of tomorrow.

The simplest variation of the Multiple Trails Plan may be designated as Stage I. Through rescheduling the student and teachers day on the basis of

equalizing current learning time over an extended school year, it is possible to increase a basic classroom capacity by 25 to 37 percent. This space and a corresponding release of student and teacher time becomes available immediately at no extra cost. In fact our field studies which call for a rescheduled teacher day and/or week show dollar returns can also be realized immediately as well as the space.

The Multiple Trails Plan will have its greatest appeal to educators who have innovative tendencies. The traditional or less flexible school principal or teachers may not elect to move beyond Stage I, however, with inservice training and guidance some of these teachers may find it desirable to work towards Stages IV and V where students work through a very highly individualized program based upon continuous progress up or along a series of learning trails, i.e., the science, social studies, math or language arts trails.

Teacher time, pupil time, and space are considered as resources which are released through the time equalization progress. They are deposited in our hypothetical Educational Reserve Bank where they can be drawn upon to meet individual needs or interest in Stages II and III. The resources set the stage for the introduction of new learning or instructional programs.

Stage II draws time from the Reserve Bank in order to allow students who want to accelerate to do so. In this case savings may be postponed. In Stage III students draw upon their reserve time to meet their special individualized needs. For some the extra learning time may be used to broaden or enrich a student's background. For others the time may be required to complete minimal programs, to obtain remedial or corrective help or to begin to take part in more self-directive learning activities requiring independent study. Acceleration activities are played down in all stages except Stages II and IV. In the latter case the decision to accelerate becomes one of the staff whereas in Stage II the decision to accelerate is left to the individual student and/or his guidance counselor.

The Multiple Trails Plan calls for greater flexibility on the part of the teacher and the school administrator. They must be prepared to assume new roles when the nature of the students' day or the teachers' day changes. For example, the typical Jr. High School student who currently has seven daily classes or a potential 35 preparations a week could find himself with considerable free time on his hands as he begins to work through a weekly schedule which limits him to 4 or 5 classes a day or 20 to 21 classes per week.

His "E" time or free time becomes an asset which must be or should be utilized along different lines than he may have ever worked in the past. However, with new unit approaches and multi-media he may need the extra time to progress into fields of study which interest him or are basic for continued progress in tomorrow's educational world.

Similarly, flexible teacher schedules can be developed that open their day to team planning, curriculum development, and educational research. In the new schedule a secondary school teacher may go from 25 preparations per week to 15 preparations in Stage I and to 18 preparations in Stage II. In some of the more innovative Multiple Trails teacher schedules it is possible to free an entire teacher's day or two morning or afternoon sessions to curriculum work, field trips or research types of activity.

All recommended acceleration plans will require first instance money since it is necessary to pay teachers for at least a months extra service. While teachers in the Multiple Trails Plan will also receive extra compensation, savings realized through staff reductions will more than cover all extra school year extension costs. This is especially true in the Stage I and Stage V patterns, however, some allowance may be made at the start for inservice training work or special curriculum development activity. As a result we stress the need

for planning inservice training funds in every budget for an extended school year program based upon a rescheduling of the teacher day, week or term.

In this brief review I have outlined directions that a school system may want to pursue if it is serious about wanting to realize desired educational or economy goals. Because some of the designs are complex, the administration and/or school board may need help. As a result I have been recommending the formation of a national task force or study group which could assist the small or large school district in the identification of problems or procedures which should be followed. If you see the inherent value in some of the extended school year plans recommended for consideration, I would appreciate your sending a letter to Washington in support of a national task force which could provide leadership and even financial support where first instance money is desirable.

In a few weeks we should be able to facilitate the selection of an appropriate extended school year design through the use of a new computer program. A contract is currently being completed which will enable us to project a school's enrollment for some 3 to 5 years. We shall make our projections in terms of past attrition ratios, current teacher-pupil and current class-pupil ratios. By feeding this data into a computer plus essential information regarding teacher salaries, operating costs, debt service charges, etc., we can project future costs or savings to show the advantages or disadvantages of a given extended school year plan. It is anticipated that 15 to 20 minutes will be required to complete such studies. Our present plans call for the use of a portable console which when plugged in will give us access to a Master Computer that has been programmed to show dollar costs or savings. Later on we may be able to show educational advantages inherent in selected ESY programs, but this will take time.

As you can readily see there is more than one path to the goals of economy, space, and a more effective pattern of education. Each school system should select the plan or design which is suited to its needs or goals. Once this has been done, it is essential that teachers and parents be involved in the planning processes. If your public runs true to form, you can expect some vocal opposition the moment the general public hears about the prospect of a lengthened school year. It is, therefore, essential to maintain good relations with the news media. Radio, T.V. and newspaper reports can be your allies so it helps to alert them early to your plans. If they intend to do a story, as they will, a good preliminary briefing is important since confusion or a misunderstanding by the reporter can easily result in a broadcast or newstory that will mislead the public.

Opposition comes from many sources. Frequently, it comes from well intentioned parents who are afraid that children will be hurt by a longer involvement in school work. Often complaints will stem from a fear that the school is taking the child from the parent. Here, it is important to try to distinguish between the righteous mother trying to protect her family and the individual who mouths an emotional appeal to protect a vested interest. Unfortunately, there are many of the latter who will help organize a group of opposing parents.

Considerable opposition will come from individuals who express a real or fancied fear about vacations. Don't overlook the importance of this issue. Failure to communicate with the parents on the vacation issue can create problems. Unfortunately, many educators fail to realize that national vacation patterns are changing to the point that an inflexible school calendar is interfering with parents who desire to take vacations between September and June.

Years ago the Superintendent of Schools in Nashville, Tennessee said, "We can demonstrate that our program is more effective than ever, but we can't beat the vacation issue." Back in those days summer was the only time to travel.

Today the picture is changing. Consider, for example, the impact of the following statements:

1. Businessmen and their families, nurses and shopkeepers, lawyers, and physicians, vacationing policemen and college students--they make up the country's ski population which is estimated by the United States Ski Association in Denver as being between three million and five million people and growing at a rate that will put ten million more Americans on skis within the next decade.

2. Ski Industries America reports a 50 percent increase in expenditures on skiing activities in the past five years.

3. Another attraction is the snowmobile. Areas which were beyond reach in mountainous areas after the first snowfall are now easily accessible via this new attractive method of transportation.

4. A survey of vacation patterns show that 51 percent of the people currently take their vacation in the summer, 14 percent take them in the spring, 12 percent in the winter and 23 percent in the fall.

These figures show a willingness or desire of many people to get away from their work or established routines throughout the year. If these individuals elect to take their children with them, the traditional school has a problem. Schools in Florida and Arizona have been adjusting to an influx of children during the winter, but resort communities in other states have not been as ready to accept tourist children in the summer, spring or fall. This has been evident in the opposition we have felt in the Catskills or Lake George area by those who felt that an extension of the school year into the summer would ruin their tourist business. Their schools could readily emulate schools along the Atlantic Seaboard which frequently have more students in their summer programs than are housed in the regular school year.

Another big question centers about air conditioning. Our research has shown that children learn as well in the summer as they do in other seasons. While I believe that all schools should be air conditioned since many parts of the country can be as hot in late May, June, Steptember and October as others in July and August. Who says that schools should close during July and August?

When I am in Los Angeles in late September, sweltering in a temperature in the high 90's or low 100's, I wonder if their school calendar is the one brought to the gold fields on the coast by a Vermonter back in 1849, one that was dictated by the needs of farmers who probably couldn't get their gardens planted before the 4th of July.

Dollar savings from the school reorganization plans described can readily pay for needed renovations including air conditioning.

Some parents are concerned about the health of their children. Our research has shown that boys and girls are not harmed by the extension of the school year. In fact, three studies have shown that the regularity of school life may contribute to the maintenance of good health over the summer. This was evident in the School of Human Resources where every child in the ESY program was a wheel chair patient. Here the school physician said at the end of the summer.

> "The positive aspects of an extended summer school program, from a physician's point of view, are so great that I do not hesitate recommending that this should be standard operating procedure for any children with physical handicaps."

If these children can take the pace, the non-handicapped certainly can't complain.

Some individuals will stress the need for enrichment programs in the summer. "The children are tired of the same old things. They need a change." Here, I can concur, only I want to stress that a good school program needs to be enriched throughout the year. Children need field trips, movies, audio-visual

aids, art, music, recreation, camp experiences, and a chance to work on individual research type experiences. These have to be included as a part of a balanced program, one that is based on the recognition that they are purposeful activities, essential to the realization of both short and long range goals of a school.

Not too long ago I was struck by the remarks of a Black Power leader when he said, "Why talk of a longer school year? Our kids have such a poor school that they would be better off if schools weren't open any more than 150 days a year." In a way he was right. His school was not offering an effective program. When I talk of an extended school year program, I want a good program, one that presents all children with a challenge throughout the new school year.

How to build such a program can pose problems. The transition costs of bridging the gap from a traditional school to a new innovative one can be high. In one community the school board has been given two choices. New schools can be built to accommodate an enrollment increase, but they will all operate in terms of the rigid patterns of the past. Having spent all available tax funds, there will be nothing left to support a new continuous progress program.

To achieve the latter goal, the school administrators are willing to forgo the new buildings. Through adopting a new lengthened school year program, it will be possible to house all of the children comfortably for several years. Money saved can be used to take out walls, renovate old buildings, install new lighting, air condition old buildings, purchase modern media, install a data processing system, provide an extensive inservice teacher training program and revise the curriculum in terms of a new educational objective mix. Faced with such an alternative, what would you do? My latest report leads me to believe that the school board will elect the extended school year plan.

I am convinced that many of the problems of educating children for the 21st century can be resolved, but only with some drastic changes. You may find

it necessary to pass permissive legislation in your state before an extended school year program can be instituted. Attendance laws, minimum salary laws, tenure and pension rules and regulations may have to be modified. In some schools it will be necessary to re-examine the curriculum. In others it may be necessary to examine the nature of a teacher or student day. On the other hand, some school systems can adopt one or more of the possible lengthened school year plans with little if any change. Just what is done in your school district will depend upon the role you have assigned to the schools; to what extent are they run for children.

Can they or should they be limited to a pattern of schooling which, at best, provides many of them with little more than part time education? In view of tax pressures, you may feel that this/all that you can do for them. However, before you give up, why not take a look at some of the ways to reschedule a school in hopes that one of them will provide you with the resources necessary to provide as good, if not a better program without placing new tax burdens upon your citizens.